IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend claims 1 and 9 as indicated below.

A listing of the status of all claims 1-20 in the present patent application is provided below.

1 (Currently Amended).   A method for synchronizing redundant network elements, the method comprising:

transmitting a checkpoint indication signal simultaneously to a primary element and at least one backup element, wherein each of the primary element and the at least one backup element has one or more connections to a network;

generating a first checkpoint that is indicative of a first status of the primary element associated with a first arrival time of the checkpoint indication signal at the primary element;

generating a second checkpoint that is indicative of a second status of the at least one backup element associated with a second arrival time of the checkpoint indication signal at the at least one backup element; and

comparing the first checkpoint and the second checkpoint to determine a synchronization between the primary element and the at least one backup element.

2 (Original). The method according to claim 1, wherein the

checkpoint indication signal is transmitted from the primary

element, the at least one backup element or a source outside the

network.

3 (Original). The method according to claim 1, wherein the step

of generating a first checkpoint further comprises the steps of:

identifying a first arrival time of the checkpoint

indication signal at the primary element;

finishing processing of any data arriving at the primary

element before the first arrival time of the checkpoint

indication signal;

suspending processing of a plurality of data arriving at

the primary element after the first arrival time of the

checkpoint indication signal;

generating a first checkpoint that is indicative of the

status of the primary element in suspension;

transmitting the first checkpoint to the at least one

backup element; and

resuming processing of the plurality of data arriving at

the primary element after the first arrival time of the

checkpoint indication signal.

4 (Original). The method according to claim 1, wherein the step

of generating a second checkpoint further comprises the steps

of:

identifying a second arrival time of the checkpoint

indication signal at the at least one backup element;

finishing processing of any data arriving at the at least

one backup element before the second arrival time of the

checkpoint indication signal;

suspending processing of a plurality of data arriving at

the at least one backup element after the second arrival time of

the checkpoint indication signal; and

generating a second checkpoint that is indicative of the

status of the at least one backup element in suspension.

5 (Original). The method according to claim 4 further

comprising the steps of:

keeping the at least one backup element in suspension after

generation of the second checkpoint;

comparing the second checkpoint with the transmitted first

checkpoint;

updating the at least one backup element based on the

transmitted first checkpoint if the second checkpoint does not

match the transmitted first checkpoint based on a predetermined

set of criteria; and

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taking the at least one backup element out of suspension.

6 (Original). The method according to claim 4 further comprising the steps of:

taking the at least one backup element out of suspension after generation of the second checkpoint;

comparing the second checkpoint with the transmitted first checkpoint; and

reporting an error if the second checkpoint does not match the transmitted first checkpoint based on a predetermined set of criteria.

7 (Cancelled).

8 (Previously Presented). At least one processor readable storage medium for storing a computer program of instructions configured to be readable by at least one processor for instructing the at least one processor to execute a computer process for performing the method as recited in claim 1.

9 (Previously Presented). A system for synchronizing redundant network elements, the system comprising:

means for transmitting a checkpoint indication signal

simultaneously to a primary element and at least one backup

element, wherein each of the primary element and the at least

one backup element has one or more connections to a network;

means for generating a first checkpoint that is indicative

of a first status of the primary element associated with a first

arrival time of the checkpoint indication signal at the primary

element;

means for generating a second checkpoint that is indicative

of a second status of the at least one backup element associated

with a second arrival time of the checkpoint indication signal

at the at least one backup element; and

means for comparing the first checkpoint and the second

checkpoint to determine a synchronization between the primary

element and the at least one backup element.

10 (Previously Presented).   A method for synchronizing

redundant network elements, the method comprising:

receiving at a backup element a checkpoint indication

signal;

generating a first checkpoint that is indicative of a

status of the backup element associated with an arrival time of

the checkpoint indication signal at the backup element;

receiving a second checkpoint from a primary element that

is indicative of a status of the primary element associated with

an arrival time of the checkpoint indication signal; and

comparing the first checkpoint and the second checkpoint to

determine a synchronization between the primary element and the

backup element;

wherein the checkpoint indication signal is transmitted

simultaneously to the primary element and the backup element.

11 (Previously Presented). A system for synchronizing

redundant network elements, the system comprising:

means for receiving at a backup element a checkpoint

indication signal;

means for generating a first checkpoint that is indicative

of a status of the backup element associated with an arrival

time of the checkpoint indication signal at the backup element;

means for receiving a second checkpoint from a primary

element that is indicative of a status of the primary element

associated with an arrival time of the checkpoint indication

signal; and

means for comparing the first checkpoint and the second

checkpoint to determine a synchronization between the primary

element and the backup element;

wherein the checkpoint indication signal is transmitted

simultaneously to the primary element and the backup element.

12 (Previously Presented).   The method according to claim 1,
wherein the checkpoint indication signal is positioned similarly
relative to other signals arriving for processing at the primary
element and the at least one backup element.

13 (Previously Presented).   The system according to claim 9,
wherein the checkpoint indication signal is positioned similarly
relative to other signals arriving for processing at the primary
element and the at least one backup element.

14 (Previously Presented).   The method according to claim 10,
wherein the checkpoint indication signal is positioned similarly
relative to other signals arriving for processing at the primary
element and the at least one backup element.

15 (Previously Presented).   The system according to claim 11,
wherein the checkpoint indication signal is positioned similarly
relative to other signals arriving for processing at the primary
element and the at least one backup element.

16 (Previously Presented).   The method according to claim 1,

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wherein the step of generating a first checkpoint comprises

generating a plurality of first checkpoints that are indicative

of a first status of a respective plurality of sessions on the

primary element associated with a first arrival time of the

checkpoint indication signal at the primary element, wherein the

step of generating a second checkpoint comprises generating a

plurality of second checkpoints that are indicative of a second

status of a respective plurality of sessions on the at least one

backup element associated with a second arrival time of the

checkpoint indication signal at the at least one backup element,

and wherein the step of comparing the first checkpoint and the

second checkpoint comprises comparing the plurality of first

checkpoints and the plurality of second checkpoints to determine

a synchronization between the primary element and the backup

element.

17 (Previously Presented).   The system according to claim 9,

wherein the means for generating a first checkpoint comprises

means for generating a plurality of first checkpoints that are

indicative of a first status of a respective plurality of

sessions on the primary element associated with a first arrival

time of the checkpoint indication signal at the primary element,

wherein the means for generating a second checkpoint comprises

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means for generating a plurality of second checkpoints that are indicative of a second status of a respective plurality of sessions on the at least one backup element associated with a second arrival time of the checkpoint indication signal at the at least one backup element, and wherein the means for comparing the first checkpoint and the second checkpoint comprises means for comparing the plurality of first checkpoints and the plurality of second checkpoints to determine a synchronization between the primary element and the backup element.

18 (Previously Presented). The method according to claim 10, wherein the step of generating a first checkpoint comprises generating a plurality of first checkpoints that are indicative of a status of a respective plurality of sessions on the backup element associated with an arrival time of the checkpoint indication signal at the backup element.

19 (Previously Presented). The system according to claim 11, wherein the means for generating a first checkpoint comprises means for generating a plurality of first checkpoints that are indicative of a status of a respective plurality of sessions on the backup element associated with an arrival time of the checkpoint indication signal at the backup element.

20 (Previously Presented).   The method according to claim 1,

further comprising:

generating the checkpoint indication signal periodically.